

# The Downfall of Licinius

## 127

with the reactionary policy of Lieinius, which had at length culminated in active persecution.

But the dominant cause of this war is to be found in political ambitions rather than in religious passions, and if we must declare who of the two was the aggressor, it is difficult to escape throwing the blame upon Constantine. Licinius was advancing in years, Even if he had not outlived his ambitions, he can at least have had little taste for a campaign in which he put all to the venture. Constantine, on the other hand, was in the prime of life, and the master of a well tried, disciplined, and victorious army. The odds were on his side, He had all the legions which could be spared from the Rhine and the Danube, and all the auxiliaries from the Illyrian and the Danubian provinces the best recruiting grounds in the Empire to oppose to the legions of Syria and Egypt. Constantine seemed to the historians to have been predestined to the throne, and the Church, but the result which drew him on was universal dominion.

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